



Half Crazy

May 2023
Issue No. 7

The Newsletter of the Seated Half Society

Feature Coin

1842 Small Date, Small Letters



Imaged by Heritage Auctions, HA.com



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1842 PCGS-64 Small Date, Rev of 1839



**Liberty Seated
Collectors Club**
Uniting collectors of Liberty Seated coinage since 1973



Half Crazy

The Newsletter of the
Seated Half Society

May 2023, Issue #7

Current Membership - 33



1853 PCGS-3 Liberty Seated Half Dollar VLDS
Seated Half Society has 33 Members

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SHS President's Letter

Since separating our newsletter (Half Crazy) from the E-Gobrecht I have received several requests from E-Gobrecht readers to be included on our mailing list for Half Crazy. This is encouraging as these persons are not currently members of our association. Hopefully they will be in the future and we support their interest.

I have just welcomed our 33rd member into our society. There are a few others waiting to join. One problem we have is distance. Some that are interested live a good distance from any of our members and do not (for various reasons) attend shows or travel. We hope they will not give up as we want them in our group, it is just a matter of logistics for the physical audit of their collections.

In this issue we have some exciting news. I don't want to spoil it so read further to discover what it is. Our featured coin in this issue is the 1842 Small Date/ Small Letters variety. The feature article will, in part, discuss this rare variety.

Eric Orden at PCGS does it again. A new die Variety for the 1850-O Liberty Seated Half Dollar.

This will be your last chance to order our new SHS polo so don't put it on hold; get it done! And finally, we feature some interesting Seated half curiosities to wet your appetite for searching.

Dennis Fortier, SHS President

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Again, if you believe you qualify for membership, please contact Verne Pitman or myself to schedule an audit of your collection. All LSCC members who qualify are welcome. We hope you will join our association and become a member of the Seated Half Society.

Dennis Fortier, SHS President
ricajun@msn.com

Verne Pitman SHS Vice-President
vwpitman@gmail.com

Also, see November 2021 issue for club By-laws and Audit information, or the club website.



Big News!



The 52nd 1878-S Half Dollar Identified

On April 22 of this year Hibid.com auctioned off a newly certified 1878-S Liberty Seated Half Dollar. PCGS VG details (cleaned). This coin had been raw in an old collection dating back to sometime in the late 1960's and early 1970's.

It was pointed out to me by SHS member Micah Uptegrove. He hoped it might be a new one. I sent the link off to Liberty Seated Half Dollar researcher and expert Bill Bugert. Bill examined the scans and was able to confirm it as a newly discovered example of the key 1878-S, and is the 52nd known.

Note the dark spot near Liberty forehead and the dig in (in God we tr)us(t).

Overall this is a decent example (in spite of the cleaning) of this sought after key to the series. There are 51 individual coins listed in Bill Bugert's 1878-S Register, this is the first new example since it was published in 2020.

Anyone with information on this new example please contact me or Bill Bugert to help fill out the history of this piece. Dennis Fortier at ricajun@msn.com



Big News!
The 52nd 1878-S Half Dollar Identified
Here is Bill Bugert's Register Page

1878-S Half Dollar BB-52



Dirt in field in front of Liberty's nose and forehead and in the top loop of the (187)8

Digs between (TR)US(T) and from the left wing tip thru UN(ITED)

Grade: VG details cleaned

Certified: PCGS VG details cleaned #47097422
(encapsulated early April 2023?)

Cross reference: N/A

Known Pedigree Details

Unknown dealer who specializes in Liberty Seated coinage.

ex-HiBid Auctions (Capitol Coin Auctions), 4/22/2023:14 @ \$29,250. (LSCC member Micah Uptegrove was the under bidder.)

ex-Indiana doctor collector, 84 years old in 2023, who stopped collecting in 1973. He purchased this coin raw for \$800 in late 1960s or early 1970s from a local coin dealer most likely near an Evansville IN coin show.

Photo credit: PCGS CoinFacts



SHS Shirts Now Available for Ordering

(SHS Members Only)

During the first Annual Gathering of the SHS at the ANA, the members present expressed interest in having club shirts made for our new club. After speaking with Minuteman Press (who makes the LSCC shirts) we have a product and a price. This will be an opportunity that will not come again for some time, so please consider your level of interest. **\$38 delivered.** Send orders to Dennis Fortier, 215 Pomeroy Dr, Crossville, Tn 38558 **Deadline for ordering is Extended to June 1.** Make checks payable to Dennis Fortier.



Wanted: Quality Liberty Seated half dollar photos for this publication. High grade –Low grade, all are welcome. Anonymous or credit acknowledged as your prefer.

Send to ricajun@msn.com



Volunteer Fire Dept Badge on Liberty Seated Half Dollar

A dealer at the TSNS show in Chattanooga showed me this photo an 1854 (O?) half dollar that was turned into a Mobile Volunteer Fireman's badge that he got from his father as a boy and still has today.

Soon after the Mobile Fire Department went from volunteer to a paid fire department.



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Michael Dustin's 1853 Half Dollar

1853 Very Late Die State (VLDS) Michael Dustin

This coin captured my (Michael Dustin) attention because not only does it have reverse cuds (minor rim cuds plus a significant retained cud at 11:00), but it also has a *very interesting* internal cud showing some major internal field displacement stretching round the periphery, encompassing a large area of the field, which even removed a good deal of depth from the date.

It appears the internal portion & the outside portion of the obverse die began to break away from each other. It also appears there may be multi-tiered field displacement between the left arrow & 1, where the crack between the two (connecting to the denticles) begins. There is another similar crack from the denticles at about halfway between the right arrow & toes. I have not seen anything else quite like this.





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Michael Dustin's 1853 Half Dollar

Unusual split level internal cud





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Michael Dustin's 1853 Half Dollar Reverse





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Michael Dustin's 1853 Half Dollar Reverse Cud Close up





PCGS Finds New Die Variety for the 1850-O Liberty Seated Half Dollar

By Eric Van Orden, PCGS Variety Specialist



The 1850-O Liberty Seated Half Dollar, WB-20
is a newly attributed variety that opens a new collecting opportunity
for series enthusiasts. Courtesy of PCGS TrueView.

Every day at PCGS, we are presented with the exciting possibility of seeing something new. When that possibility presents itself, and you and your colleagues get a chance to attribute it, well... That's just fun numismatics right there!

We recently had the opportunity to attribute a new die pairing in the Liberty Seated Half Dollar series, an 1850-O. As always, with the counsel of Bill Bugert and his books as well as Mike Perkins, we were able to match and confirm this new addition.

With the 1850-O, the tough-to-see but noticeable vertical die line along Liberty's thumb and the arching die line through the lower shield both appear to be there, both diagnostics of Obverse 7. And the date appears to line up. For the reverse, the small die gouges along the base of the eagle's neck, as well as the horizontal die lines in the shield, appear to be there. Both are the diagnostics of Reverse I. Bill and Mike had no doubt about this one, and Bill said we were good to name it WB-20.

For the collector of New Orleans Liberty Seated coinage and particularly the 1850-O Half Dollar by die pair, the WB-20 is notable in that it adds one more challenging variety for which to search. Additionally, considering Obverse 7 has also been used for WB-8 and WB-18 and Reverse I for WB-12, this newly discovered die combination may provide for the Liberty Seated Half Dollar specialist insight as to the order in which these four die pairings were struck.



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Feature Article

1842 An Interesting and Challenging Year



Imaged by Heritage Auctions, HA.com



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1842 PCGS-20 Small Date/ Small Letters (Discovery Coin)

1842 is a very interesting and challenging year for collectors of the Liberty Seated half dollar series. There are different date sizes, reverse letter sizes, striking issues, die states, and more. Between the Philadelphia and New Orleans issues there are 27 known die marriages listed in Bill Bugert's Registries. Most well known are the large and small dates for both mints.

The 1842-O Small Date/Large Letters is one of the most sought after varieties in the Liberty Seated half dollar series. There are two die marriages for this variety, both are Rarity-5 die varieties, which means there is an overall population estimate of about 150 (+/-) examples. WB-1 typically has a weak strike and is often unattractive, while the other small date die variety, WB-2, is usually well struck(1). Finding a quality example of the 1842-O Small Date/Large Letters is challenging as many come with problems.

The 1842 Philadelphia small date is not to be outdone by the popular 1842-O Small Date/Large Letters, with one Rarity-7+ die variety, two Rarity-6 die varieties, and one Rarity -5, the 1842 Philadelphia Small Date offers many challenges to the collector.

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There is one 1842 Small Date/Small Letters die variety which we will discuss later. For now we will examine some of the six other Philadelphia small date die varieties.

WB-2 is a Rarity-6 die variety with a distinctive bisecting die crack thru the reverse die. WB-3 and WB-4 are double die reverses (DDR), of Rarity-6 and 5 respectively (2). These die varieties are eagerly sought out by knowledgeable Liberty Seated collectors.



1842 WB-2 RARITY-6
BISECTING DIE CRACK

1842 WB-3 AND 4 DDR

Close up of the 1842 WB-3 and 4 Double Die Reverse

Images courtesy of Bill Bugert



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The 1842-O Medium Date has a host of rare and difficult die varieties. There are five die varieties that are Rarity-4, WB-4, 5, 9, 10, 11. WB-6 and 7 are Rarity-5, and WB-8 in late die state is Rarity-6⁽¹⁾.

The ultra rare 1842 Small Date/ Small Letters, first discovered by Liberty Seated expert/collector/dealer Brian Greer in 1988, has just four known and is therefore considered not collectable. The 1842 Small Date obverse was paired with the Small Letters reverse used from 1839 till 1841. The reverse used on this variety is unknown on any other variety from previous years and is believed to be an unused left over die from 1841—Bill Bugert. In 1842 the large letter reverse was intended for use. For what ever reason the 1842 Small Date/Small Letters sells for only a fraction of the 1853-O No Arrows/Rays that also has only four examples known.

All these 1842-O die varieties can be found on the LSCC website in Bill Bugert's "A Register of Liberty Seated Half Dollars Varieties, Volume III, 1840-O to 1853-O NA."

<http://lscweb.org/BillBugertBooks/Bugert-Vol-III-NO-Part1.pdf>

And the 1840 die varieties can be found in Bill Bugert's "A Register of Liberty Seated Half Dollars Varieties, Volume V, 1839 to 1852."

<http://lscweb.org/BillBugertBooks/Bugert-Vol-V-PHL-Part1.pdf>

- (1) *A Register of Liberty Seated Half Dollars Varieties, Volume III, 1840-O to 1853-O NA*, Bill Bugert, 2011
- (2) *A Register of Liberty Seated Half Dollars Varieties, Volume V, 1839 to 1852*, Bill Bugert, 2016

(100 points needed for membership in the Seated Half Society, see our webpage for details)

<http://lscweb.org/SHS-homepage.shtml>

Request for Content

Any publication is only as good as the content it receives from its members. Articles, stories and photos are always welcome and encouraged! Please submit to the SHS Editor, Dennis Fortier at: ricajun@msn.com

Again, if you believe you qualify for membership, please contact Verne Pitman or myself to schedule an audit of your collection. All who qualify are welcome! We hope you will join our association and become a founding member of the Seated Half Society.

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